

Definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher

(23) HIGHLY QUALIFIED.—The term “highly qualified”—

(A) when used with respect to any public elementary school or secondary school teacher teaching in a State, means that—

- (i) the teacher has obtained full State certification as a teacher (including certification obtained through alternative routes to certification) or passed the State teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in such State, except that when used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term means that the teacher meets the requirements set forth in the State’s public charter school law; and
- (ii) the teacher has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis;

(B) when used with respect to—

- (i) an elementary school teacher who is new to the profession, means that the teacher—
 - (I) holds at least a bachelor’s degree; and
 - (II) has demonstrated, by passing a rigorous State test, subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum (which may consist of passing a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum); or
- (ii) a middle or secondary school teacher who is new to the profession, means that the teacher holds at least a bachelor’s degree and has demonstrated a high level of competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by—
 - (I) passing a rigorous State academic subject test in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches (which may consist of a passing level of performance on a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches); or
 - (II) successful completion, in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, of an academic major, a graduate degree, coursework equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, or advanced certification or credentialing; and

(C) when used with respect to an elementary, middle, or secondary school teacher who is not new to the profession, means that the teacher holds at least a bachelor’s degree and—

- (i) has met the applicable standard in clause (i) or
- (ii) of subparagraph (B), which includes an option for a test; or
- (ii) demonstrates competence in all the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches based on a high objective uniform State standard of evaluation that—
 - (I) is set by the State for both grade appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills;
 - (II) is aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals, and school administrators;
 - (III) provides objective, coherent information about the teacher’s attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches;
 - (IV) is applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the State;
 - (V) takes into consideration, but not be based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject;
 - (VI) is made available to the public upon request; and
 - (VII) may involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency.